

March 10, 2023

Dear Madison County Commissioners:

We are writing to express our continued opposition to the proposed Mile Creek RV Park. While we appreciate the review of the proposal by the Madison County Planning Board and staff, we believe the proposal remains inconsistent with Madison County's Guiding Principles, Growth Policies, and Subdivision Regulations. The upper Madison Valley is simply the wrong location for the proposed RV Park.

Strict adherence to the letter and spirit of the Madison County's Guiding Principles, Growth Policies, and Subdivision Regulations is crucial for proposed development (now and in the future) to protect the upper Valley from permanent, adverse impacts on its character, aesthetics, environment, and culture. Conditions that effectively work-around these Principles, Policies, and Guidelines do not constitute compliance but rather result in exceptions to the rule. And it is simply not possible to mitigate the impacts (i.e., the character and aesthetics of the valley, visual, noise, and light pollution, traffic, environmental effects, etc.) of the presence of such a large development in the undeveloped upper Valley. A fundamental question is, how could Madison County manage any proposed future development (such as stores, service stations, resorts, hotels, or even another RV park) if the subject Mile Creek proposal is approved?

There are fundamental, overarching issues that remain re. the proposed development, including but not limited to:

- Proposed development is not close to existing services and communities (Guiding Principle #1).
- Proposed development does not respect private property rights in terms of being balanced by consideration of the public interest (Guiding Principle #5). In fact, there has been little, if any, public support expressed for this proposal. More specifically, multiple potential or likely risks or adverse impacts to property owners and the public have been identified, but no benefits except to the developer.
- Proposed development is not located in areas physically suitable for development nor easily accessible by public serves (Growth Policy Goal 1, Objective b).
- Proposed development is inconsistent with the County's objective to discourage strip commercial development along arterial highways (Growth Policy Goal 1, Objective i).

Some specifics:

- Conditions for emergency services (ambulance and fire protection) do not meet the required 45 minute response time, but rather increases risk by substituting less skilled/ less experienced resources for professionally trained ambulance staff and firefighters. Also, while the Cameron fire station is nearby, it is unmanned and volunteer(s) may not be available.

- Water use and wastewater effluent from the proposed RV Park would be orders of magnitude greater than likely development/use by other landowners in the upper Valley, shifting risk to other property owners.
- The area surrounding the proposed development is largely unfenced, private lands (and some private roads). There are no conditions for the developer to inform its patrons of this, thereby shifting the risk of unintentional trespass or other impacts to other property owners. This is further exacerbated by limited availability of law enforcement.
- Restrictions on lighting to reduce light pollution are compromised to have sufficient lighting for safety, resulting in adverse impacts on aesthetics of the area as well as wildlife. A viable alternative is to deny the proposed development to avoid these adverse impacts.
- Substantial increase in traffic on Highway 87 is a given if the proposed 148 space RV Park is approved. Again, the proposed development poses significant unmitigated safety and aesthetic risks to others.
- Property values may diminish while cost of public services may increase. As such, the developer benefits while local property owners bear the burden.
- Potential impacts on resident and migratory wildlife encompasses much more acreage than the proposed development and associated mitigation, further exacerbated by pets of patrons of the proposed RV Park. Additionally, the developer indicated that there was no longer a plan for an onsite pet park because of the abundance of public land in the area.
- Concentrated visitation by potentially hundreds of people and subsequent dispersment onto local roads, trails, lakes, and rivers creates potential for overuse without proactive planning or mitigation.

The proposed Mile Creek RV Park is clearly not in compliance with the County's Guiding Principles, Growth Policies, and Subdivision Regulations as evidenced by extensive public comments. Additionally, the exhaustive list of conditions to the proposal illustrates that the proposal is non-compliant. Importantly, the conditions do not result in compliance but rather relaxation of, if not exception to, requirements. It follows that the proposal is not in the County or public's interest, and should be denied.

There were many public comments provided in recent months that express other reasons for opposition to the proposed development that we share but won't restate here.

Thanks for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Bill and Ann Maslen